

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5517
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AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
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C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMA 5505

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PINS, ELAB, PE
SUBJECT: JULY 5 STRIKE THREAT AND ON-GOING STRIKE AT SOUTHERN
PERU COPPER CORPORATION (SPCC)

REF: LIMA 5437

1. THE CONSERVATIVE WEEKLY, EL TIEMPO, REPORTS IN ITS LATEST ISSUE THAT THE MOSCOW-LINE CGTP LABOR CONFEDERATION, ITS BANK WORKERS FEDERATION, THE FAR-LEFT TEACHERS' UNION (SUTEP) AND STUDENT GROUPS WILL STRIKE JULY 5 IN ORDER TO "INITIATE A 'RED WEEK' DESTINED TO DESTABILIZE THE MORALES BERMUDEZ REGIME". ACCORDING TO EL TIEMPO, THE COMMUNIST ORGANIZATIONS ARE SUPPORTED BY THE GOVERNMENT'S OWN SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS - THE PEASANT CONFEDERATION (CNA), LABOR COMMUNITIES (CONACI), AND THE GOVERNMENT TRADE UNION (CTRP). EL TIEMPO ALSO CLAIMS THAT THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC LABOR ORGANIZATION (CNT) WILL PARTICIPATE IN THE ANTI-GOVERNMENT ACTION.

COMMENT: WHILE A NATIONAL STRIKE OF BANK WORKERS AND TEACHERS AFFILIATED TO THE FAR-LEFT UNION SUTEP IS POSSIBLE AND A SOMEWHAT GENERALIZED STRIKE OF CGTP DEPARTMENT FEDERATIONS IS CONCEIVABLE, THE VERY FACT THAT EL TIEMPO HAS PUBLICIZED THE JULY 5 THREAT
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PERHAPS MAKES IT LESS LIKELY. BOTH THE GOVERNMENT'S OWN CTRP AND THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC CNT HAVE DENIED ANY INVOLVEMENT IN PLANS FOR THE JULY 5 STRIKE, AND THE APRA-ORIENTED CTP LABOR CONFEDERATION WILL OPPOSE THIS MARXIST-LED PROTEST ACTION. HOWEVER, THERE IS THE DANGER THAT STRIKES, ESPECIALLY AFFECTING SCHOOLS, CAN LEAD TO FURTHER ANTI-GOVERNMENT STREET PROTESTS AND VIOLENCE.
END COMMENT.

2. MEANWHILE, THE STIKE AT THE SPCC ILO SMELTER CONTINUES JULY 1. WORKERS AT TOQUEPALA SUSPENDED THEIR STRIKE (PENDING RESOLUTION OF DEMANDS) UNTIL JULY 7. ON JUNE 30, THE GOP DECLARED THE ILO STRIKE ILLEGAL AND GAVE THE WORKERS 24 HOURS TO RETURN TO WORK OR FACE DISMISSAL. ACCORDING TO SPCC, THE WORK STOPPAGE IS COSTING THE GOP ABOUT ONE MILLION DOLLARS PER DAY. HOWEVER, SPCC OFFICIALS EXPRESS CONFIDENCE THAT THE UNION WILL CEDE TO THE GOVERNMENT'S "SHOW OF FORCE" AND RETURN TO WORK AT LEAST TEMPORARILY JULY 2.
SHLAUDEMAN

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